

USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

WINNING THE BATTLE OF IDEAS IN THE WAR ON TERRORISM

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This SRP is submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Master of Strategic Studies Degree. The U.S. Army War College is accredited by the Commission on Higher Education of the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, 3624 Market Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104, (215) 662-5606. The Commission on Higher Education is an institutional accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation.

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Report Documentation Page			Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188	
<p>Public reporting burden for the collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington VA 22202-4302. Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to a penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number.</p>				
1. REPORT DATE 30 MAR 2007	2. REPORT TYPE Strategy Research Project	3. DATES COVERED 00-00-2006 to 00-00-2007		
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE Winning the Battle of Ideas in the War on Terrorism			5a. CONTRACT NUMBER	
			5b. GRANT NUMBER	
			5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER	
6. AUTHOR(S) Joel Roberts			5d. PROJECT NUMBER	
			5e. TASK NUMBER	
			5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER	
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) U.S. Army War College,Carlisle Barracks,Carlisle,PA,17013-5050			8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER	
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)			10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)	
			11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)	
12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for public release; distribution unlimited				
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES				
14. ABSTRACT See attached.				
15. SUBJECT TERMS				
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT	18. NUMBER OF PAGES 23
a. REPORT unclassified	b. ABSTRACT unclassified	c. THIS PAGE unclassified		

ABSTRACT

AUTHOR: Lieutenant Colonel Joel E. Roberts

TITLE: Winning the Battle of Ideas in the War on Terrorism

FORMAT: Strategy Research Project

DATE: 14 March 2007 WORD COUNT: 6,916 PAGES: 23

KEY TERMS: Strategic Communication, Information Operations, National Strategy

CLASSIFICATION: Unclassified

This paper focuses on the United States' need to adapt its strategic communication strategy (themes, goals, and organization) in fighting the Global War on Terrorism - GWOT. While addressing the United States Army War College on 27 March 2006, former Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld said the country is faring poorly in its effort to counter ideological support for terrorism, in part because the government does not communicate effectively. "If I were grading I would say we probably deserve a 'D' or a 'D-plus' as a country as to how well we're doing in the battle of ideas that's taking place in the world today." To support this position, this paper first examines the radical ideology of our enemy plus the means and effectiveness with which that ideology is communicated. It then evaluates the strategic communication strategies employed by the Bush administration from September 11, 2001 through the end of 2006. Because we can learn from the past, it presents successful communication themes and strategies focusing on World War II and the early years of the Cold War. This paper concludes by offering recommended strategies our leaders should consider in order to win the 'battle of ideas'.

WINNING THE BATTLE OF IDEAS IN THE WAR ON TERRORISM

I say to you: that we are in a battle, and that more than half of this battle is taking place in the battlefield of the media. And that we are in a media battle in a race for the hearts and minds of our Umma.¹

—Ayman al-Zawahiri to Abu Musab al-Zarqawi,
9 July 2005

America, and much of the free world, is engaged in a long war unlike any we have ever seen. We are at war with a transnational terrorist movement / insurgency which is driven by an ideology of oppression, hatred and murder. We realize it is different and that from the beginning it has been a battle of arms and ideas.² After five plus years of operations using the military and other elements of national power, the United States' strategy for winning the battle of ideas in the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) is not succeeding. Michael F. Scheuer, 22-year CIA veteran and former head of the Osama bin Laden Unit at the Counterterrorism Center, states: "We're clearly losing. Today, Bin Laden, Al-Qaeda and their allies have only one indispensable ally: the US' foreign policy towards the Islamic world."³ An internet search of the term 'losing the war of ideas' returned over 1.7 million entries in less than one second⁴ with former Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld's assessment as the number one entry: "If I were grading I would say we probably deserve a 'D' or a 'D-plus' as a country as to how well we're doing in the battle of ideas that's taking place in the world today."⁵ Our enemies appear to understand and exploit strategic communication and information operations better, faster, and more thoroughly than strategic planners in the Bush administration, interagency organizations, and the military.

More than five years since taking the fight to our enemies, the U.S. finds itself awash in strategic limbo where it is gaining little ground on the War on Terrorism. This despite our early successes in Operation Enduring Freedom, which saw the virtual destruction of Taliban forces and Al Qaeda leadership in Afghanistan within two weeks; despite the apprehension of Khalid Shaykh Muhammad, the mastermind of the 9/11 attacks, and Walid Bin Attash, a prime suspect in the attack on the USS Cole in October 2002;⁶ despite the lightning quick fall of Baghdad and the removal of the Iraqi leadership in May 2003; despite the successful implementation of the Secure Border Initiative which has produced a drastic increase in the apprehension of other than Mexican (OTM) illegals entering the United States;⁷ despite these and many other successful military operations and interagency programs at the operational level.

While U.S. Soldiers and Marines continue to win ground battles in Iraq and Afghanistan, we are not winning the Global War on Terrorism. We are losing, in large part, because we are losing the battle of ideas. Our strategic communication strategy for winning the battle of ideas is

not clearly defined and is ineffectual - it is time for a new strategy if we hope to achieve victory in the Global War on Terrorism.

The Nature of Our Enemy

In his aforementioned address after 9/11, President Bush stated that our enemy is a "radical network of terrorists and every government that supports them." The war on terrorism starts with Osama Bin Laden and al Qaeda, but it includes every terrorist group of global reach. They are the heirs of all the murderous ideologies of the 20th century - they follow in the path of fascism, and Nazism, and totalitarianism.⁸

From the leaders of the World Islamic Front:

"...in compliance with Allah's order, we issue the following fatwa to all Muslims. The ruling to kill the Americans and their allies (civilians and military) is an individual duty for every Muslim who can do it in any country in which it is possible to do it, in order to liberate the...holy mosque [Mecca] from their grip, and in order for their armies to move out of all the lands of Islam, defeated and unable to threaten any Muslim. We...call on every Muslim who believes in Allah...to kill the Americans and plunder their money wherever and whenever they find it."⁹

The call to violence and hatred from radical Islam is very clear. Various sources (CIA Fact Book, World Atlas) put the world-wide Islamic population between 1.2 billion and 1.3 billion Muslims. Using a more conservative figure of 1 billion Muslims, if only one percent of Muslims world-wide were committed to following (or supporting) the fatwa issued by Osama Bin Laden - we would face an enemy of 10 million Islamic extremists dedicated to the type of violence we suffered on 9/11. When interviewed in his cell during the Nuremberg trials after World War II, Nazi leader Hermann Goering said that it is natural for people to abhor war - to include the German populace in the 1930s and 40s. He followed that with the observation that, despite any distaste for war, it is a "simple matter to drag the people along, whether it is a democracy, or a fascist dictatorship, or a parliament, or a communist dictatorship. People can always be brought to the bidding of the leaders. The only thing that is required is tell them they are being attacked, and denounce the pacifists for lack of patriotism and exposing the country to danger. It works the same in any country."¹⁰ Just as Adolf Hitler awakened a blinding sense of perverted nationalism within the Third Reich over seventy years ago, Al Qaeda leaders have successfully led a call to arms by convincing Muslims across the world they have 'been attacked' by the policies of the United States. As examined below, our enemy's strategy in fighting the war of words and ideology is effective.

The Enemy Strategy - It's Working

Our enemy understands that it cannot defeat the U.S. and coalition forces militarily using conventional forces. As such, and in order to achieve their end, it employs information as an asymmetric strategic means. The enemy takes individual news stories and uses them to damage coalition efforts as much, or more than with any kinetic engagement. Additionally, Al-Qaeda appears to use tactical operations in support of a larger strategic communication or information operations strategy. The bombing of the Al-Askari Shiite mosque in February 2006, in order to fuel sectarian strife and violence, is an example of tactical operations supporting an information strategy. Although no one died in the mosque bombing, over 1,300 Sunnis were killed in Shiite reprisals the following week.¹¹ This gave start to the sectarian violence, which has since migrated to civil war and continues to be the focus of coalition forces one year later.

In giving commencement remarks at the United States Military Academy in 1955, President Eisenhower told the graduating cadets, “In... the achievement of national historical objectives, no mastery of command can substitute for an intelligent comprehension of the economic goals, the political impulses, and the spiritual aspirations that move tens of millions of people”.¹² Eisenhower’s precepts are especially applicable to anyone in a leadership position; particularly in a strategic role as the head or spokesperson for an ideology.

Our enemies clearly understand this. In the previously referenced excerpt from his letter, one can see that the number two al Qaeda leader Ayman al-Zawahiri, comprehends and is actively pursuing those “political impulses and spiritual aspirations” that move tens of millions of people. The authoritarian ideology we are fighting in the War on Terrorism does not have an agreed-upon name, although many describe its political qualities as Islamofascism. The fact that al-Qaeda has not embraced a descriptor appears to be by design. This is an outcome of their ambition to be seen as representative of all Muslims, and not as an elitist minority, controlling cadre, or terrorist point men. In this endeavor, they desire to benefit from the tolerance the United States and other Western democracies historically exhibit toward minorities in the name of religious freedom while simultaneously dominating the Islamic faith. Matters are made worse by Western governments’ continuing inability to differentiate between moderate Muslims and the Islamofascists, their sympathizers, support cells, front organizations, and apologists. Recently, there have been a number of the preceding groups which have issued highly publicized fatwas professing their opposition to acts of terror - acts that many of them have supported, or at least condoned, for years.¹³

Our enemies have enjoyed many more successes in the battle of ideas than have we and our coalition partners; they have convinced much of the world that the Global War on Terrorism

does not exist and is merely an expansion of American Imperialism. The free press, long a vanguard of Western democracies - along with the internet, creates a ready line of operation for the enemy. This line of operation becomes a forum for those within our democracy who violently disagree with the administration to do so in a vitriolic manner with impunity. The enemy is quick to respond via the internet and the press (Al Jazeera and the Afghan Islamic Press among others) at every opportunity which allows them to demonize the entire West as Crusaders, infidels, religious zealots, and decadent neo-conservatives. Examples include the enemy's capitalization and exploitation of pictures of American 'torture tactics' at Abu Ghraib prison; Danish newspaper (and subsequent reprint) of cartoons and other depictions of Allah; plus video of any collateral damage or civilians killed by U.S. Soldiers or aerial bombing - to include video and pictures of civilians killed by Israelis during the short conflict with Hezbollah in Lebanon. Whether because of our national values, or fear of the Federal Communications Commission, the U.S. mainstream media hesitates to show images which might stir nationalism in the fight against terrorism. Although increased patriotism and support for the war on terrorism might follow, so could the unintended consequence of blind hatred for the enemy (and Muslims in general). Examples include Palestinian/Arabs dancing in the streets on 9/11, videos of American decapitations, and innocent victims jumping to their deaths from the World Trade Centers in lieu of burning. The exact types of images we shun due to their provocative nature, the enemy skillfully uses, such as the recent cell phone footage of Saddam Hussein's execution, and the much seen 'Juba - Sniper in Iraq' video produced and distributed for recruiting jihadists by the Islamic Army in Iraq. The latter, also aired by CNN in October 2005, shows graphic details of U.S. service members being killed by a sniper and includes commentary by the sniper.

The enemy makes every attempt to foment Islamic anger against the West and to gain sympathy for their cause, portraying themselves as victims. Familiar themes include the occupation, and resultant desecration, of Islamic holy lands by U.S. forces, 9/11 conspiracy theories (though not originated by, but engendered by British Muslims), and the precept that the war in Iraq was purely for American oil interests.

Lastly, many scholars view the long standing Israeli-Palestinian conflict (and the U.S. support of Israel) as the primordial motivation behind Islamic extremism. It is interesting to note that while the West struggles to gain the upper hand in the battle of ideas; our enemy is able to keep the world's focus on issues which muddle the War on Terrorism. After the short Israeli-Hezbollah conflict in Lebanon, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad - the President of Iran, hosted a 'Review of the Holocaust: Global Vision International Conference' in December 2006 to study whether the attempted Nazi extermination of Jews was a myth. Although the gathering was

characterized by much of the West as an anti-Semitic hate fest, the conference gained some validity throughout the world due to the attendance of orthodox Jews and former Louisiana State Representative David Duke.¹⁴ Our enemy leaders continue to successfully appeal to the deepest religious convictions of the Muslim population in order to maintain the momentum of a world-wide jihad and clash of civilizations.

Evaluation of Current U.S. Strategy

While studies and evaluations of Operations Iraqi and Enduring Freedom exist (such as the Iraq Study Group), it is more difficult to determine progress in the overall War on Terrorism and the battle of ideas. However, based upon the following, our strategy is not succeeding:

- The Department of Homeland Security (established shortly after 9/11 to unify efforts for our national security) has been marginalized in its strategic role in the War on Terrorism. Its inability to adequately respond to the Hurricane Katrina disaster, due to leadership and organizational flaws, casts doubt on its capacity to prevent or respond to terrorist actions as well. “Critical elements of the National Response Plan were executed late, ineffectively, or not at all. Additionally, command and control was impaired at every level.”¹⁵
- The Taliban is experiencing resurgence in Afghanistan where poppy harvests are at record levels.
- In Iraq, adaptive insurgent tactics and escalating sectarian violence has the country embroiled in a civil war and the elected government on the verge of collapse.
- Extremists in Africa are heeding al-Zawahiri’s call for “Muslims, especially those in Yemen, the Arab Peninsula, Egypt, North Africa and Sudan, to participate in a holy war against secular government forces in Somalia.”¹⁶
- North Korea has conducted nuclear bomb tests in the fall of 2006 and the six-country talks over the future of their nuclear program have stalled.
- Iran, which is dedicated to the destruction of Israel and continues to defy the United Nations, may be nuclear capable in the near future.
- The Department of Defense has appointed its third Central Command commander and third Multinational Force-Iraq commander since the start of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Every year in Iraq since the end of major hostilities was announced in May 2003 has become more violent. Because of the human element, war is unpredictable - and up to now the U.S has been unable to quickly adapt its strategy as necessary. After key objectives were attained in Phase III of Operation Iraqi Freedom (the destruction of the Republican Guard and

removal of Saddam Hussein from power), coalition forces were not able to sustain the momentum and keep the peace necessary for a transition of authority to Iraqi Security Forces in Phase IV (Stabilize) and Phase V (Enable Civil Authority). The enemy is using the unpredictable nature of war and chaos (in Iraq and the Global War on Terrorism) to its advantage.

We appear to be losing on three fronts in the battle of ideas - one internal audience and two separate external audiences.

Internal Audience - The American public. Americans are confused by the mixed strategic messages presented by our leadership. We were told in the days and weeks after 9/11 to live our lives, travel by air, get back to work, and get back to shopping (while being watchful). Rightfully so, our leadership did not want the country to succumb to the terrorists' objectives of shutting down the U.S. economy, but many took the call to get back to shopping as a shortsighted contrivance which served to further strengthen the stereotype of the American conspicuous consumer. Yet, during his 2002 State of the Union address, the President appealed to "every American to commit at least two years - 4,000 hours over the rest of your lifetime - to the service of your neighbors and your nation." An additional call was made for 200,000 volunteers for the newly established USA Freedom Corps.¹⁷

The American public has also received mixed messages regarding the subject of winning versus losing in Operation Iraqi Freedom. The Iraq Study Group authors state, "The situation in Iraq is grave and deteriorating. There is no path that can guarantee success..."¹⁸ During his confirmation hearing with the U.S. Senate on 05 December 2006, Secretary of Defense Robert Gates was asked if he believed we were currently winning in Iraq. His reply to Senator Levin was "No, sir." Later in his testimony, Secretary Gates said he agreed with General Peter Pace, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, who the day prior said, "No, we're not winning, but we're *not* losing (emphasis added)."¹⁹ Less than two weeks later, former Secretary of State Colin Powell said he agreed with Secretary Gates, but went further to say, "So if it's grave and deteriorating and we're not winning, we are losing."²⁰ Military and political answers to the question, 'Is Iraq actually engaged in a civil war?' are just as muddled as answers to the question, 'Are we winning?'

American voters demonstrated their own evaluation (displeasure) of OIF and the War on Terrorism in the November mid-term elections by putting the Democratic Party in charge of both the House of Representatives and the Senate. As depicted in Figure 1 below, American approval of the President and support for the war in Iraq has dropped markedly in the three and

one half years since the war began. Polling percentages on whether or not we are winning the War on Terrorism have consistently mirrored approval ratings for Operation Iraqi Freedom.²¹

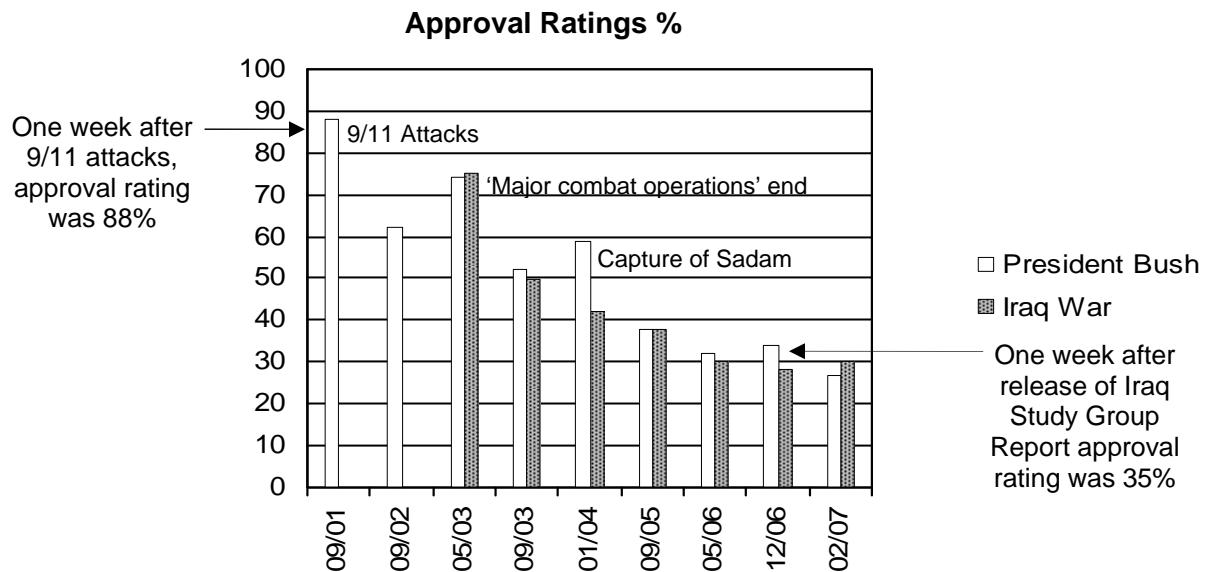


Figure 1

There is a growing disconnect between the service members deployed overseas fighting the GWOT and the American public. Apart from the increasingly grim news most see on television or read in the paper, few have any attachment to what is happening outside our borders. There is little that connects the majority of Americans with those fighting the War on Terrorism. Former Chief of the Army Reserves, Lieutenant General Helmly remarked “Our Army is on a wartime footing, but the real challenge is the rest of our country is not on a wartime footing.”²² Many in the military believe that the Army and Marines are at war while the rest of America is at the mall. The original groundswell of support beginning after the attacks of 9/11 has turned into apathy at best, and for many, dissonance or protest. The media is quick to provide coverage of disaffected family members of Soldiers killed in the war. Cindy Sheehan, an anti-war activist whose son Casey Sheehan was killed in Iraq, attracted international attention for an extended demonstration outside President Bush's ranch in Texas.

This perceived decrease in support is not a result or indication of a lack of patriotism within the country, but due to the administration’s paucity of internal strategic communication themes to continually remind the public of the cause and continued need for the war. We do not provide a clear strategic message to the American people concerning the overall War on Terrorism; particularly how the operations in Iraq and Afghanistan are a part of a larger

campaign. Many Americans believe we are fighting three separate wars (the War on Terrorism, another war in Iraq and a third in Afghanistan) and do not understand how other democracies are participating in the War on Terrorism; how dangerous the threat or enemy is; and the catastrophic consequences of defeat.

External Audience # 1 - Western Democracies and other nations fighting the War on Terrorism. Just as American pride was at a zenith shortly after the attacks of 9/11, so was support for the U.S. in Europe and other free countries. Citizens from 78 countries, literally from A-Z, Argentina to Zimbabwe, died in the collapse of the World Trade Center.²³ International support and sympathy for the U.S. was abundant. French newspapers ran headlines after the attacks which read "Nous sommes tous Américains" - we are all Americans. However, favorability ratings of the United States (particularly in Europe) have been on a steady decline since the invasion of Afghanistan in 2002. More notably, since the invasion of Iraq (and the subsequent finding of no weapons of mass destruction) the ratings have plummeted. The U.S. must rekindle the grassroots support of other democratic nations in the War on Terrorism. We cannot rely solely on the United Kingdom, Australia, and Canada as partners if we are to fight terrorism for a generation.

External Audience # 2 - Muslim nations (particularly those in the Middle East and Central Asia). Anti-American sentiment, which may rise and fall in Europe based upon the administration that occupies the White House, holds steady among the majority of Muslim nations. Polls from the summer of 2006 reveal that 90 percent of residents in predominantly Muslim countries view the U.S. as the primary threat to their country.²⁴ Whether Muslim hostility to the United States reflects a reasoned evaluation of specific policies and administrations, rather than a prejudiced belief system is a matter of both academic and political debate. In order to counter growing anti-American sentiment overseas, President Bush formed the now defunct White House Office of Global Communications to "coordinate strategic communications overseas that integrate the President's themes and truthfully depict America and Administration policies."²⁵ The office was originally headed by his former press secretary Karen Hughes who is now the State Department Undersecretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs.

Whether because of an actual oppressive and imperialist U.S. foreign policy, or through manipulative hate-producing teachings from Al Qaeda leadership (or both), much of the world simply hates the United States. Many people in the world, and some within our borders, believe the U.S. received her comeuppance on 9/11 for past and ongoing transgressions. For those people, perception is reality until something is done to change the perception. As Mayor Rudy Giuliani proved in one of the largest cities in the world, little things can make a huge difference;

little things can change perceptions. In order to alter the perception of New York City as a violent crime and drug metropolis, he chose to not spend the majority of resources chasing after the violent criminals. Instead, he implemented a plan to target turnstile jumpers in the subway, graffiti artists, and panhandlers. He believed if the city took care of the little things to change its appearance and identity, the big things (drop in violent crime) would follow - and he was right. During his two terms as mayor, Giuliani's adoption of the "Broken Windows" theory, which suggests that stopping the little things will deter bigger infractions, resulted in a drop in murders from 2,801 in 1994 to 537 in 2003 - a reduction of 81%.²⁶ Perhaps our foreign policy should make similar small, yet decided changes which could reduce the perception abroad of American arrogance - such as hiring (or training) foreign diplomats who speak the language where they are posted. Absent a change in our future National Security Strategy, America will continue to foster democratic movements and institutions throughout the world. Many people in those countries where we support and foster democratic movements may unjustly believe we are *forcing* democracy on them where is not wanted. According to an African proverb, 'The one who throws the stone forgets; the one who is hit remembers forever'. Many cultures, religions, states, and ideologies perceive themselves as being hit by the 'American rock'. We may not be able to make them forget, but can build trust based on future action and policy.

The small things said and done with integrity and modesty by our political leaders, armed forces, non-governmental organizations, and diplomats over the long haul may shift the external perceptions of American hubris. This can serve to abate the growing sense of group-think animosity toward the United States and the west. The *manner* and *method* in which we conduct foreign policy and economic development abroad may be as important as the policy itself.

The Way Ahead

A popular cowboy adage regarding destinations was, 'If you don't know where you're goin', then any path you take will get you there.' This appears to have been the strategy on the War on Terrorism, the battle of ideas, and the War in Iraq for the last three years. Winston Churchill once said of U.S. strategic planning, "You can always count on Americans to do the right thing - after they've tried everything else first." The first thing the administration must determine is the following: what type of war are we fighting, and is it the type of war we *should* be fighting? As President Bush considers new strategies for the campaign in Iraq and receives recommendations from the Iraq Study Group, the State Department, Department of Defense, and the National Security Council, he should broaden the scope of senior deliberations to include a review of the overall strategy in the War on Terrorism (and not simply Iraq). The

country has lost its focus on the War on Terrorism for many reasons, not the least of which is the deteriorating situation in Iraq. However, it is imperative to determine as much as possible the type of war GWOT is. “Terminology is important. Are we fighting terrorism or are we truly fighting a global transnational insurgency?” This determination and the resultant terminology are critical as it will drive the strategy, doctrine, and tactics employed to ensure national objectives.²⁷ Only after the type of conflict is established (may change in different parts of the world), can we determine the target audience, desired behavior outcomes, and strategic communication goals and methods of employment.

Strategic Communication and Policy Recommendations:

The 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review states, “Victory in the long war ultimately depends on strategic communication by the United States and its international partners.”²⁸ The following national policy and strategic communication initiatives will aid in the effective propagation of ideas supporting the goals articulated in this new strategy for the Global War on Terrorism.

- *Adopt (in part) Recommendation # 2 from the 2004 Defense Science Board Task Force Report on Strategic Communication.* The President should establish a permanent strategic communication structure within the National Security Council (NSC) and work with Congress to create legislation and funding for a Deputy National Security Advisor for Strategic Communication and a Strategic Communication Committee within the NSC.²⁹ The Strategic Communication Committee should have members from DOD, DOS (Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs), DHS; the Attorney General; the Chief of Staff to the President; the White House Communications Director; the Director of National Intelligence; and the Broadcasting Board of Governors. This committee should be empowered to assign responsibilities in order to carry out the functions and tasks of strategic communication. Additionally, the USG should adopt the current DOD Strategic Communication definition as follows: “Understand and engage key audiences in order to create, strengthen or preserve conditions favorable for the advancement of USG interests, policies, and objectives through the use of coordinated programs, plans, themes, messages, and products synchronized with the actions of all elements of national power.”³⁰

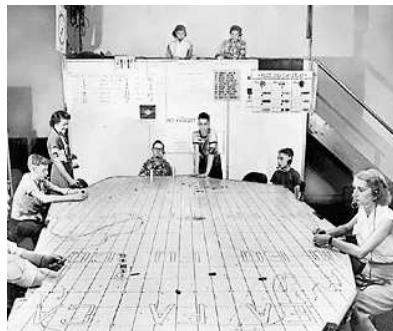
- *Re-tool strategic messages and themes to the American people, and by inference to our allies and enemies.* Whether we are attempting to gain the ‘hearts and minds’ or ‘trust and confidence’ of those who are oppressed under a tyrannical regime, our efforts will prove to be fruitless if the administration does not have the trust and confidence of the American people. Our enemy may have correctly determined the will of the Western consumer as the center of

gravity which to target in order to achieve ultimate victory. Early in the War on Terrorism, the President and other members of the National Security team stated we are in a war for the survival of the country. In his second inaugural address the President stated, "The survival of liberty in our land increasingly depends on the success of liberty in other lands."³¹ If our leaders believe our country's survival is truly at stake, they must clearly communicate that to the American people without fostering a nation-wide panic, but imbuing the citizenry to generations of selfless service, sacrifice, and courage.

As the Cold War grew in scope and complexity, President Eisenhower fully understood the necessity for the "intelligent comprehension of the economic goals, the political impulses, the spiritual aspirations that moved" the American public. The United States was living under the umbrella of mutually assured destruction and our citizens were fully cognizant of the threat posed by the Soviet Union. Nuclear bomb drills were routine in communities and public schools from the late 1940s through the early 1960s (see Figure 2).³² Students and their parents were actively engaged in the civil defense of their community (Figures 3 and 4).³³ Although our



Children were taught to "duck and cover" under their desks and were herded into school basements for periodic air raid drills.



High school students man a Ground Observation Corps Center, which was charged with warning the state of impending nuclear raids.



Civil Defense wardens sign up volunteers in 1957.

Figure 2

Figure 3

Figure 4

country was not under a war-time footing, as in WWII, our leaders communicated the serious nature of the Soviet threat (strategic message). Additionally, American citizens understood the need to participate in civil defense and to prepare for possible nuclear attacks - these actions and sacrifices reinforced strategic themes by both the Eisenhower and Kennedy administrations. Today in the Global War on Terrorism, Americans receive mixed messages about the threat and about what they can or should do to support the overall war effort.

- *Teach civics in high school as a required subject for all 9th graders (internal audience for strategic messages).* This may appear to be a small remedy, but over the course of decades

in the War on Terrorism could produce significant results in articulating strategic themes - just as Mayor Giuliani's 'broken windows' strategy in New York City and Eisenhower's bomb drills and wide-spread civil defense participation. Mandatory civics for 9th graders would reach our largest student population (by grade) - 4.9 million students annually, in public schools alone.³⁴ Many of our secondary schools do not offer civics classes, yet this is an important foundation for young Americans who may well live with the War on Terrorism for the next 20 years. According to a recent survey of 14,000 college freshman and seniors, the average civic literacy score was only 53% (letter grade F) on basic knowledge of U.S. government functions and history.³⁵ Another recent study showed that 20% of high school seniors believe Germany was an ally of the U.S. during WW II, and 28% of fourth graders do not know what it means to 'pledge allegiance to the flag'. According to President Bush, "This is more than an academic failure. Ignorance of American history and civics weakens our sense of citizenship. In recent events, our children have witnessed the great character of America. Yet they also need to know the great cause of America. They are seeing Americans fight for our country; they also must know why their country is worth fighting for."³⁶

- *Immediately increase the size of the Army and the Marine Corps.* Expanding the end strength of the Army by 65,000 and Marines by 27,000 as proposed by Secretary Gates allows for increased operational tempo for Phases IV and V (stabilize and enable civil authority) within the construct of the military's Theater Campaign Phasing Model. Additionally, larger forces would facilitate the ratios required for counter-insurgency operations and allow for the services to better conduct humanitarian assistance.

As ambassadors for their particular service (and as flesh and blood recruiting posters), all service members Sergeant and below, Lieutenants, and Junior Warrant Officers should be required to wear their Class-B, or service equivalent, uniform while traveling to and from leave or temporary duty. Senior noncommissioned officers, company grade and senior officers should be highly encouraged to do the same. These uniforms will serve as constant reminders to the public of the War on Terrorism and the service member's sacrifice of duty. During World War II, almost everyone knew a service member (if not several) - one out of every ten Americans was serving in uniform. Today, less than 1% of Americans serve in the Armed Forces and many people do not know a service member. Having service members travel in uniform as a public relations activity will engage two key audiences: young service members themselves and the American public. The service member will develop pride in his / her branch of service and duty to the nation, while their interaction with the public will make Americans more receptive to strategic communication themes.

- *Reduce our dependence on foreign oil.* In his State of the Union address after the 9/11 attacks, President Bush encouraged Congress to act in order to increase energy production at home so America is less dependent on foreign oil (to a thunderous ovation). Currently we import over half of our oil from the Middle East and unstable nations such as Venezuela, Nigeria and Algeria. With no increase in domestic production, we are projected to import 75% within three years.³⁷ In addition to altering the perception that oil in the mid-East is our main vital interest and the primary reason we are involved in Iraq, a reduced dependence on foreign oil would enhance our security by reducing our vulnerability during short-term crude price fluctuations. Additionally, by requiring U.S. auto makers to increase EPA miles per gallon by 10% per manufactured vehicle we would significantly reshape our image of “gas guzzling” egoists as perceived by many Muslims, and Europeans.

- *Increase the Department of State (DOS) Budget and Personnel.* As the lead agency charged with advancing U.S. objectives and interests in the world, the department is undermanned and under funded. The administration should increase the state department end strength by 50% to 51,000 Foreign Service personnel and double its budget to \$70 billion (with an immediate increase in foreign language proficiency training). According to the Washington Post, in 2005 the State Department only had 27 (out of 30,000+) employees who are fluent in Arabic. This despite serving 21 embassies and consulates in a region with a population of 300 million people with very different dialects from east to west.³⁸ We should recruit qualified first-generation Arab-Americans and Muslim-Americans into Foreign Service who understand the languages and cultures of both the United States and Muslim countries. When asked if victory was achievable in Iraq, former Secretary of State Powell said, “Victory is not in the hands of the American government or the American president. Victory, to be achieved or not to be achieved ... is increasingly in the hands of the Iraqi leadership”.³⁹ The same applies for the overarching War on Terrorism. The United States must rely less on the military instrument of power and apply more resources to diplomatic, information, economic, financial, intelligence, and law enforcement (DIMEFIL) efforts in the War on Terrorism.

Joseph Stiglitz, former chief economist of the World Bank, projects the cost of the Iraq War alone on the U.S. economy will be one trillion dollars (\$1,000,000,000,000) in a conservative scenario. Current spending rates are two billion dollars per week, which equals \$285 million per day, seven days per week.⁴⁰ While the vast majority of these expenditures are in fact military, we need a strategy and policy which shifts more of this responsibility and resources to the State Department. An example of a needed policy change would be to realign the State Department’s six regions to mirror the five geographic Combatant Commander’s (COCOMs) areas of

responsibility. This change would enable success in two crucial domains: first, it would facilitate greater partnerships with the Department of Defense and the COCOMs as the COCOMs conduct Theater Security Cooperation Planning (TSCP) in support of DOS. Additionally, it would eliminate overlapping lines of operation and boundaries which require COCOMs to coordinate with multiple DOS regions in order to conduct TSCP and military operations. The regional realignment would boost much needed cooperation in Central Command, Pacific Command, and the emergent Africa Command.

- *Engage Hollywood (and the media at large) in formulating and disseminating strategic messages.* Former Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld said, “The only place we can lose is if the country loses its will, and the determinant of that is what is played in the media.”⁴¹ In order to regain and maintain domestic, and possibly international, support for our efforts in the War on Terrorism, the administration should reenergize its collaboration with the media industry (radio, television, motion pictures, and the internet). One month after the 9/11 attacks, Presidential Advisor Karl Rove met with Hollywood executives and out of that meeting was formed the “Hollywood 9/11 Committee”. The committee aided the administration in the production of several Public Service Announcements, the most notable a short television video of Muhammad Ali explaining that the war on terrorism was not a war against Islam.⁴² ABC, in conjunction with Jerry Bruckheimer (Top Gun) produced a 13-episode series titled ‘Profiles from the Front Line’.

A similar undertaking occurred 65 years ago when Army Chief of Staff George Marshall and General of the Army Air Corps Hap Arnold went separately to Hollywood to meet with Jack Warner of Warner Bros. Studios - but the participation and results from Hollywood were astronomically different. From their meetings were formed the 1st Motion Picture Unit and the Office of War Information (out of which came Voice of America). During the war years alone, Hollywood and these units consisting of film industry personnel, made over 100 feature films, documentaries, and more than 250 newsreels shown in theaters before the main attraction. This does not include the thousands of newsreels created by the Army Signal Corps and the U.S. Navy. Notable directors in uniform included Major Frank Capra, Lieutenant Commander John Ford, and Captain John Huston. Actors who served both in line units and with the 1st Motion Picture Unit included Captain Ronald Reagan, Major Clark Gable, Major Jimmy Stewart, Captain William Holden, Sergeant Alan Ladd, Sergeant George Reeves (Superman), and Major Theodor Geisel (Dr. Seuss). More than 35 films were nominated for Academy Awards, with eight winning Oscars.⁴³

Whereas many entertainers still perform for the military with the U.S.O., the only celebrity of note who has served in the Global War on Terrorism is Army Ranger Pat Tillman, killed in

action in Afghanistan. Many professional athletes put their careers on hold and answered the call to duty during WWII and the Cold War. Included in that group, among many others were: Joe Louis, Ted Williams, Joe DiMaggio, Bobby Jones, and Jackie Robinson. Although industrial mobilization and the draft were implemented for WWII, volunteer service (in uniform and on the home front) was critical for our nation's success. Of the 16 million men who served in uniform during WWII, 6 million (38%) volunteered for service and were not drafted.⁴⁴ Additionally, 250,000 women enlisted to serve in the Women's Army Corps (WACs), as Women Air Service Pilots (WASPs), and as Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service (WAVES).⁴⁵ The U.S. government galvanized a female workforce of millions through the skillful use of strategic themes concerning volunteerism and sacrifice, as evidenced by the 'Rosie the Riveter' campaign, which symbolized all U.S. women who worked in manufacturing jobs to support the World War II effort. This single advertising campaign increased the number of women in the workforce from 12 million to 18 million, with more than 3 million women working in war plants in traditional male occupations.⁴⁶

Public perception about the War on Terrorism is different than WWII because we were not attacked by a nation state on 9/11 and because Americans do not understand the continuing threat terrorism poses to our national security. This perception can be modified, in part, through a partnership between the administration, Hollywood, and the media (print and internet). Because of mass media, celebrities today have a greater ability to influence and shape public opinion both domestically and abroad than their predecessors. Notwithstanding the strategic communication themes they could convey in their movies, the coalition would be well-served by talented directors such as Steven Spielberg and George Lucas. Additionally, military service by A-list actors and professional athletes like Brad Pitt, Reese Witherspoon, Shaquille O'Neal, and Peyton Manning could encourage others to serve and would galvanize media attention during their tours of duty.

Conclusion

Since the fall of the Soviet Union in 1989, the U.S. has been the world's only 'super power' and the most influential nation for 17 years. Much of that power has been exercised by the U.S. Armed Forces as demonstrated in Desert Storm and by the quick defeat of conventional forces in both OEF and OIF. However, even with the most capable military force the world has ever seen, the United States finds itself losing a theater campaign in Iraq, facing serious setbacks in Afghanistan, and lagging behind the enemy in fighting the ideological war of terrorism. The world in which we grew up changed on 9/11, and our military strength alone will

not be able to win the Long War. Just as David slew the giant Goliath with a small stone and a mighty warrior is laid low by a simple virus, our enemies will continue to search for and exploit any vulnerability created by an open society. Terror tactics will remain a primary strategy for the enemy - he is committed to winning the war and inflicting maximum casualties to both military and civilian targets; our enemy hates Americans and what we represent. We, and other democracies, will have to adopt a new and comprehensive strategy which clearly employs additional elements of national power - quite likely with the military in a supporting or background role.

By engaging with the American public we communicate why it is important to fight, why it is important to sacrifice and serve, and the consequences of losing the War on Terrorism. By engaging with external audiences we will communicate the virtues of freedom over tyranny and our resolve to finish the fight. The strategic communication strategy for fighting the battle of ideas (and its relation to the grand strategy of winning the War on Terrorism) must be well-defined and continuously coordinated among all U.S. agencies and coalition partners. With a high-priority charter from the administration, proper organization and funding, and interagency unity of effort we can develop the comprehensive U.S. strategic communication campaign required to counter our enemy and dominate the battle of ideas.

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